

Free Will Unit

The Giver by Lois Lowry

Unit Goals:

Goal 1: Students will demonstrate their understanding of the concept of free will or lack thereof by color marking the culminating text, *The Giver*, by responding to other readings in the form of quick-writes and essays, by participating in class discussions, and by creating an Alternative Book Report.

Goal 2: Students will examine their right to free will as stated in the “Bill of Rights” and compare these rights to those of other countries through interpreting constitutional language and exploring other countries’ constitutions.

Goal 3: Students will understand the terms utopia and dystopia and apply the definition to discussion and writing activities within several texts.

Goal 4: Students will apply the concept of free will to their own lives by creating their own life and career goals based on their new understanding.

Activities and Assignments:

1. Journals and Quick Writes (10 Quick Writes at 3 points each = 30 points,
25 points per essay = 50 points)

Students are all expected to have a binder and loose leaf paper. Many days the class will begin with quotes that deal with the concept of free will. The student will write in response to one of four questions that the teacher has listed on the board. At least two of these quick writes will be developed into full essays.

2. Color Marking the *The Giver* (60 points total)

Students are expected to a variety of colors of crayons, markers, colored pencils, highlighters, etc. As a student is reading he/she will mark every occurrence of certain literary techniques or concepts. This activity ensures that each student is reading the novel looking for connections within the text and also to the concept of free will. The student will demonstrate understanding through his/her notes in the margin and color marking. This assignment will be reviewed by the teacher weekly.

- Orange for every new character and their description
- Blue for literary techniques such as metaphors, similes, imagery, etc.
- Pink/Red for every occurrence of lack of free will to someone or something
- Blue for every occurrence of free will/choice given to someone
- Yellow for quotes that interest you

The student will also write notes in the margin that show deep thought throughout and about the reading.

3. Socratic Circles (6 Socratic Circles at 5 points each = 30 points)

These Socratic Circles will be based on the color marking done in *The Giver* or a separate reading chosen by the teacher for that day. The student will be graded on his/her attentiveness and participation. The student will be graded on the rubric below. The Socratic circles will make up 10% of the student's grade.

4. Alternative Book Report (30 points total)

Each student will complete an A project. There are four ways to complete an A project: one A, two B's, one B and 2 C's, or four C's. The descriptions of these projects are in the handout Reading Projects and Activities by Jo Higgins. A student can use any of these project ideas, create his/her own, or do a variation of one. A student is welcome to ask the teacher's thoughts on a new idea but he/she does not need permission to create a new type of project (but he/she will need to defend whether it is an A, B, or C project). A student must be able to explain covert learning that took place while completing the activity. The student will then present the project to the class. The student will share with the class how his/her report relates to the goal of understanding the concept of free will in *The Giver*.

5. Interpreting the Bill of Rights (10 Rights at 2 points each = 20 points)

Legal language is often difficult to understand. The student will translate from legalize into common English that an even Elementary School student can understand. The assignment is graded out of 20 for completion and understanding, which is illustrated through correct interpretation and simple wording. Each bill will be graded on the following rubric.

6. Applying History to the Bill of Rights (30 points total)

Students will be split into eleven groups. Ten of the groups will be assigned one of the "Bill of Rights" which they will research on the history of its creation and Supreme Court cases that have revolved around its Bill. The eleventh group will be responsible for providing a definition of amendment and describe how the amending process works. The eleventh group should also give examples of some amendments to the Bill of Rights. These projects will be presented with either a PowerPoint, a display board or another approved idea (to get it approved talk to or e-mail the teacher). Students will also complete a peer and self-evaluation in paragraph form giving each member between 1 and 10 points. The average of these will count for 25% of each student's grade.

7. Foreign Countries' Constitutions (32 points total)

Each student will be allowed to choose a country to study. The choices will be made with a lottery in which students pick a number from a hat. The students will research the Constitution of the country of choice in search of the freedoms it provides. There will be four sections to the paper:

1. Direct quotes from the country's Constitution that deal with freedom
2. Quotes converted into common English
3. Comparison and contrast to United States "Bill of Rights"

4. Explain how your life would change if you had to live by the foreign country's Constitution

8. Short Story Readings (10 points for discussion, 25 points for essay = 35 points)

“The Garden of Time” by J.G. Ballard

“Bad Day in Utopia” by Scott Thompson

"The Pain Peddlers" by Robert Silverberg

Collection of H.G. Wells short stories

Each group will be assigned to a short story which they will read and qualify the story as a dystopia or utopia. The group will make a list of reasons to support its claim. Then each student will write his/her own essay based on the evidence the group as gathered.

9. “My Own Free Will” Project (50 points)

Now that the students know that they have the right to be anything and do anything they please, they are going to make a plan. The student is to research his/her ideal career. Then the student will search for the college of his/her choice. The student will then create a timeline of him/her reaching this career goal. The student will compile all of the information and the reasoning behind his/her choices into a concise presentation which he/she presents with any medium he/she chooses.

10. Class Worksheets (30 points total)

10. Participation (30 points total)